

CHARIVARIA.

WE understand that the recent visits of German deputations to this country have had the most satisfactory results. All the visitors have come to the conclusion that a little island where it is nearly always raining is really not worth taking.

A contemporary points out that the present summer is not yet the worst we have had. We regard as positively criminal this attempt to put the rain-department on its mettle.

The leader of the Conservative Party in the Reichstag referred to Prince BELOW, on the eve of his retirement, as "our dear Chancellor." The exact figure was £25,000,000.

In time of war, Mr. HALDANE states, the cavalry of the Territorial Army would act in conjunction with the Regular Cavalry. This would to some extent get over the difficulty of the scarcity of horses. First, we take it, the Regulars would charge the enemy: then they would return, dismount, and give the other fellows a chance.

TARIFF REFORM
MEANS

JUST TAXATION
says *The Express*. "Just this, and nothing more?" asks a frivolous Free Trader.

Once more a claim has been put forward for an after-life for animals. Which reminds us that it is not, we believe, generally known that there is quite a sharp division of thought among animals as to whether there is an after-life for men and women.

A lady was robbed of her dressing-case at Euston last week. It contained

nothing of value, and is supposed to have been taken in mistake for her jewel-case. This is the sort of thing that sours so many criminals.

the benefit of the small classified advertiser. This should dispose of the report that the new departure was intended to benefit *The Daily Mail* itself.

The business of a certain publishing house notorious for a certain type of novel has been turned into a limited company. It is satisfactory to know that the limit has been reached at last.

The *Joint Stock Companies Journal* proposes that there should be examinations for Stockbrokers. They are to be a sort of Honours examination, to distinguish them from the ordinary examinations in Bankruptcy.

The Hicks Theatre has changed its name and is now The Globe Theatre. Our oldest evening contemporary will, however, retain its title and not be called *The Hicks*.

A correspondent writes to *The Daily Mail* to express the hope that the Great Western Railway will not abolish second-class carriages, as, on another line which has done this, he always has to travel first. This should put an end to any hesitation on the part of the G. W. R.

In distributing prizes at a City school, last week, the Lord Mayor recalled the occasion on which, at the age of five, he was kissed by a former Lord Mayor in that same room. "I never thought then," he said, "that I should one day be here as Lord Mayor myself." Here we see Nature's wonderful



A DESERVING CASE.

Loafer. "CAN YER SPARE US A 'PENNY, MATE?"
Working Man. "WOTCHER WANT A 'PENNY FOR?"
Loafer. "COS I GOT ONE, AND I WANTS ANOTHER FOR THE PRICE OF 'ARF A PINT."
Working Man. "EVER DONE A DAY'S WORK IN YER LIFE?"
Loafer. "NO, GUV'NOR, CAWN'T SAY AS I 'AVE."
Working Man. "WELL, YER NEVER DONE A PORE BLOKE OUT OF A JOB, ANYWAY. 'ERE'S YER A 'PENNY."

A "Greater London" edition of *The Daily Mail* has been planned, so *The Daily Mail* informs us, partly for the purpose of enabling this journal's host of readers in the metropolitan area to secure more London news, and partly for

law of compensation at work.

"Young Man wants situation, Doorman; take fire if required."—*Advt. in "South Wales Echo."* We like this spirit. It is the stuff that martyrs are made of.

HOME-DEFENCE AT SHORT NOTICE.

'Tis Liberty alone that trains a nation
To fight without a moment's preparation.

Modern British Humorist's.

["You say Lord Roberts has got hold of the wrong ideal, and with your verdict I thoroughly concur. Does the noble lord think for one minute that the men of this country would remain mute to the call if our islands were about to be invaded?"—*From a letter, typical of British intelligence, appearing in "The Daily Chronicle."*]

An untrained citizen addresses a recruiting sergeant:—

"Landed this morning, did they? That's all right;
Don't go and worry; you may count on me;
If native pluck can do it, by to-night
We'll push these beggars back into the sea;
We'll show old Bons his error;
Once they attack us, we're a holy terror.

"We should have liked a longer notice, true—
Ten days or so, to get us nice and fit;
But then it's just these bolts from out the blue
That test the latent worth of British grit;
None but the brave would dare
To sleep until the enemy is there.

"I'm brave like that. When scare-crows come and say,
'Now, my good lad, you've got to learn to shoot,'
I send 'em double quick about their way,
Wearing the order of the hobnail boot.
'National Training?' What O!
No slavery for Britons—that's my motto!

"But if the foe has really crossed the tide,
If he's already camped on England's shore,
Why, then the patriot swells in my inside,
And of my own free will I ask for gore;
I ask to up and at 'em,
By the Great Eastern Railway or the Chatham.

"My rifle? No, I never touched that game;
But I can soon pick up your bag of tricks—
Which end to stuff the bullet, where to aim,
And how to pull the bally part that clicks;
And if the thing went wrong
I've got a pair of fists would come out strong.

"No use for fists at over half a mile?"
Still, I could always shout 'Hooray!' 'Brayvo!'
I'd work my lungs and maffick all the while,
To cheer my comrades, blazing all they know;
And make things hum the merrier,
Giving 'em 'Go it, Tommy!' 'Good old Terrier!'"

O. S.

CROSS-EXAMINATIONS FOR THE HOME;

OR, LITTLE ARTHUR'S ROAD TO KNOWLEDGE.

(*Little Arthur, aged 12; Uncle John—Captain John Lambert, late 28th Hussars—aged 44.*)

Little Arthur. It was very kind of you to take us all to the theatre yesterday, Uncle John.

Uncle John. Don't mention it, old man, don't mention it. I'm only too glad you enjoyed yourself. Must buck up your father and mother now and then. Can't let 'em rust in the country all the year round.

L. A. I'm sure they thought it was very kind of you, Uncle; and it was a great treat for me.

U. J. That's all right, Arty. We've got to make a man of you, you know.

L. A. Yes, Uncle, I quite see that. Do you think seeing *The Belles of Belluno* will make a man of me quicker?

U. J. Of course it will, my boy. Pretty music, pretty girls, pretty dresses, and all that. Got to see 'em some day, you know, so you may as well see 'em now—eh, what?

L. A. Yes, Uncle, and that's why I'm so much obliged to you. But when I'm grown up will people do what they do in *The Belles of Belluno*?

U. J. What do you mean?

L. A. Will they all sing things together and dance?

U. J. Well, perhaps not all of 'em.

L. A. But will some of them?

U. J. One or two might. But we're living in England, you know, and *The Belles of Belluno* were in Italy, weren't they?

L. A. Yes, Uncle. Is that what they do in Italy?

U. J. You bet they do—every time.

L. A. Then I don't want to live in Italy.

U. J. That's right, Arty, you stick to that. You're an Englishman, and don't you let 'em forget it.

L. A. No, Uncle, I won't. But, if people are not going to do things in that way when I'm grown up, I don't see how the play will help me to be a man.

U. J. Ah, I daresay you don't now, but you will some day.

L. A. I hope so, Uncle. But was it a very clever play, Uncle?

U. J. Well, I enjoyed it all right.

L. A. Yes, Uncle, I know you did. You laughed much more than Papa, and Mamma didn't laugh at all.

U. J. Didn't she? Ah, well, she's a woman, you know. She can't help it, so we mustn't throw it in her teeth.

L. A. No, Uncle, I'll try not to. I'm sure it ought to be a clever piece.

U. J. Why?

L. A. Well, three people wrote the music, and three others wrote the words, and another man produced it, so it ought to be much cleverer than if only one man did it.

U. J. So it ought, Arty. You've just about hit it.

L. A. Do all the ladies in Italy wear very short dresses, Uncle?

U. J. Every one of 'em, Arty. It's a national custom.

L. A. I thought it must be, because *Lady Dolly Vavasour* didn't wear a short dress all the time, did she?—and she's supposed to be English.

U. J. What a chap you are, Arty, for noticing things.

L. A. But in the last Act her dress was the shortest of all. I suppose that was because she was getting accustomed to Italian ways.

U. J. That's it, of course. Doosid smart she looked, too.

L. A. Yes, Uncle, I thought so, too.

U. J. Did you now. You've got an eye, young man.

L. A. Thank you, Uncle; but I didn't like her singing.

U. J. No, poor Kitty never could sing for nuts, but she keeps piping away. Does her best, you know.

L. A. I'm sure she does, Uncle; but why did you all clap your hands so at her song?

U. J. What song?

L. A. It's in the book here (*taking book and reading*):

"I'm Dolly this, and I'm Dolly that,
And I'm Dolly in prose or rhyme,
I'm Dolly thin and I'm Dolly fat,
And I'm Dolly all the time."

What does it all mean, Uncle?

U. J. Blessed if I know.

L. A. Then why did you clap your hands and say *encore*?

U. J. Oh, it went, you know—catchy sort of thing.

L. A. But it wasn't very clever, was it, Uncle?

U. J. You can't have everything clever, you know.

L. A. No, Uncle; but you ought to have clapped your hands at the clever things.

U. J. Oh, I ought, ought I?

L. A. Yes, Uncle, I tried to. But, Uncle!

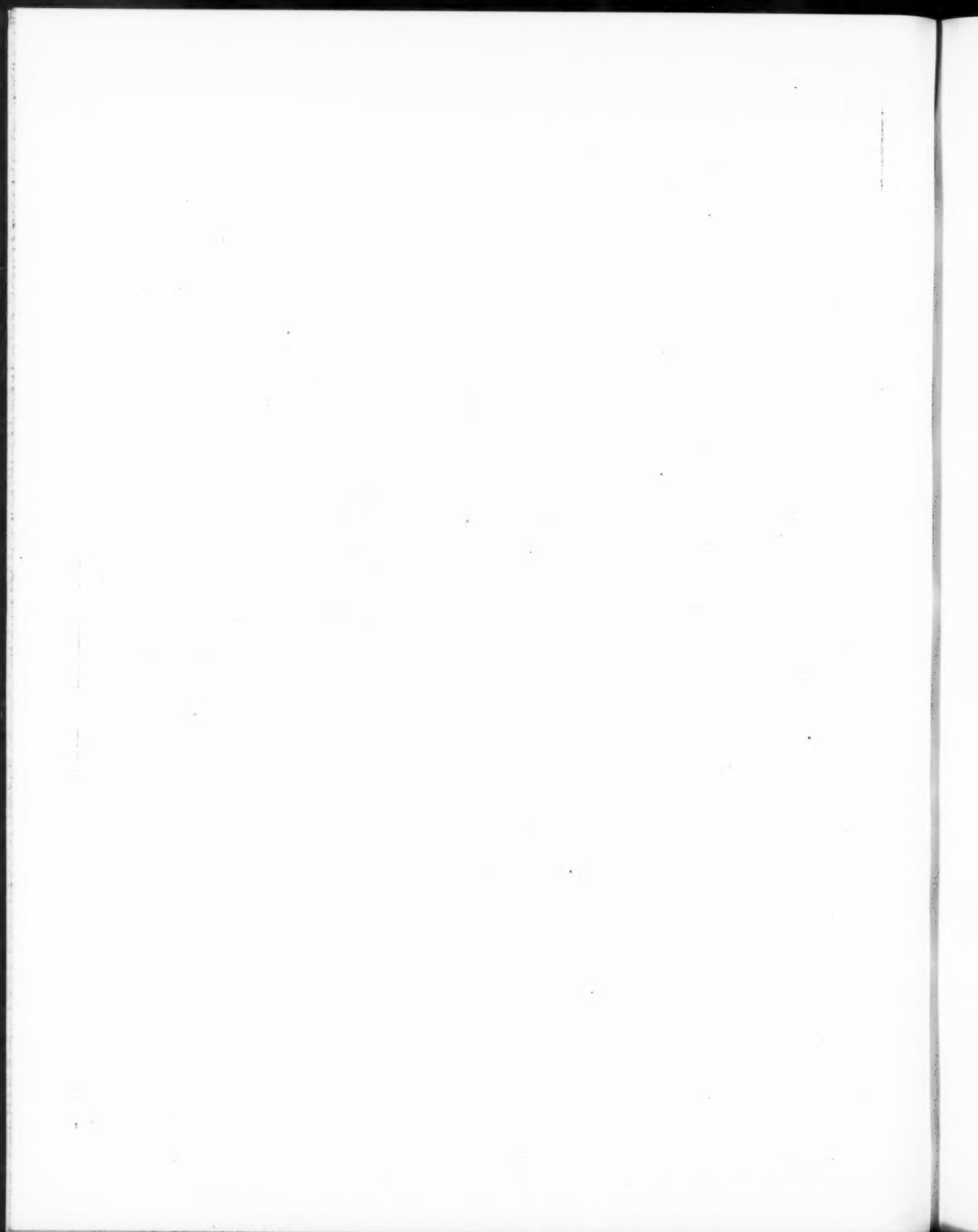
U. J. Yes, old boy.

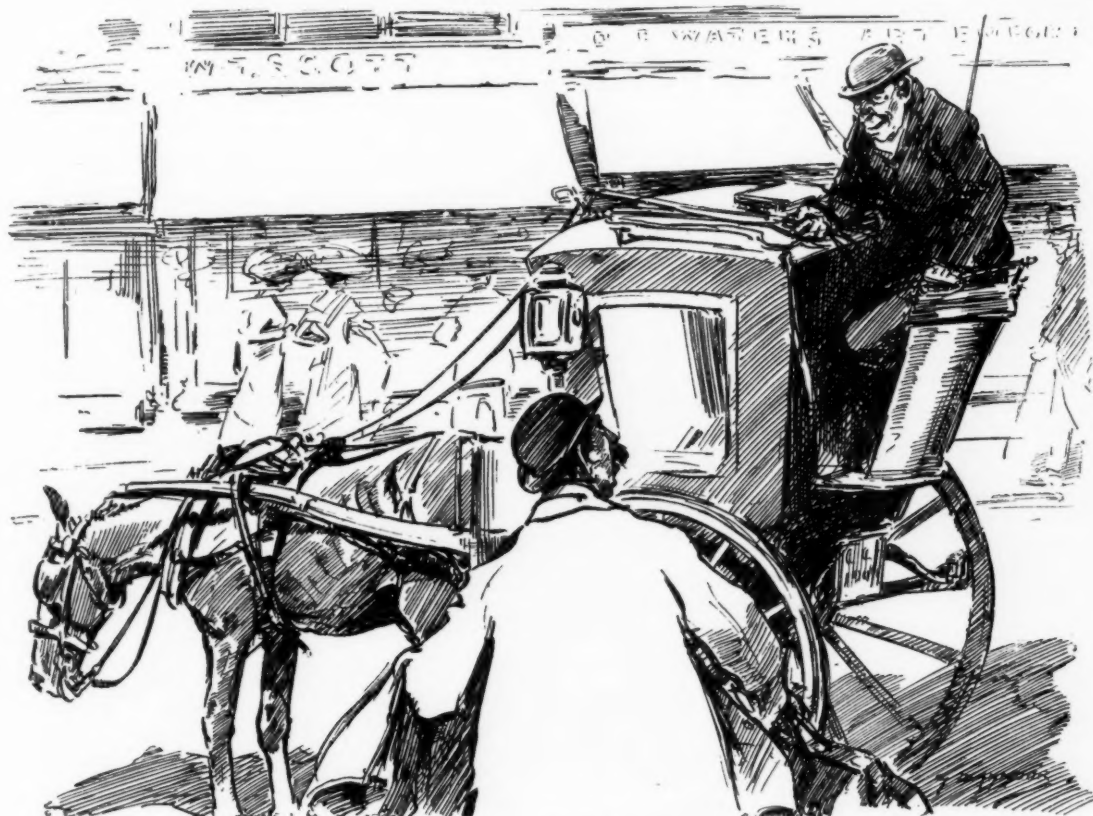
L. A. Isn't *Lady Dolly Vavasour* a married lady?



“ONE WHO KNOWS.”

ABDUL HAMID (in retirement at Salonika—reads). “‘CAPTURE OF PERSIAN CAPITAL BY NATIONALISTS—DEPOSITION OF THE SHAH.’ DEAR! DEAR! ANOTHER OF US MOVING WITH THE TIMES!”





"HALF-A-SOV. FOR YOU IF YOU GET ME TO KING'S CROSS IN SIX MINUTES."

"IT AIN'T NO USE, CAPTAIN; YOU MAY BRIBE ME, BUT YOU CAN'T CORRUPT THE OLD 'OSS."

U. J. Rather. Very much so.

L. A. But all the other men were making love to her.

U. J. So they were; Italy, you know.

L. A. But did you think they ought to, Uncle?

U. J. No, certainly not—but those Italian johnnies are a bad lot.

L. A. But you seemed very pleased, Uncle. You were rolling about in your seat with laughter, and so was Papa.

U. J. No, no, we weren't—not with laughter anyhow. It was anger, Arty, that's what it was.

L. A. Well, I've never seen Papa angry in that way before.

U. J. Perhaps not, but I've known your father longer than you have.

L. A. Yes, Uncle, I suppose so. But when—

U. J. Can't listen any more, old man. Got to take the dog out.

LOWER RIVER CAUSERIE.

(For similar information as to social functions on the Upper Reaches, see the Society papers.)

SOUTHEND is unusually full this year, in spite of the Budget proposals, and the countless attractions of this favoured spot appeal with irresistible force to an ever-increasing *clientèle*. Not without reason has Southend been described as the Venice of the Home Counties, and many of the most exclusive members of Limehouse Society are to be seen at this delightful resort. The pier, from which the sea is visible at all states of the tide, is thronged with a gay crowd of loungers who are attracted by the unique collection of slot machines and the

view of the ironclads in the offing. The absence of saloon bars on the Government ships has, however, been adversely commented upon by several visitors whose opinions on such matters are entitled to respect.

The return of Mr. and Mrs. Barking-Plaistow from their honeymoon to take up residence in their Plumstead villa was signalled by an informal gathering of friends, who welcomed the happy couple to this charming riparian resort. At 5.30 a most tasteful repast was put before the delighted guests. We are privileged to state that the chief ingredients of the meal were assorted shellfish and Ceylon's premier product. The day was somewhat sultry, and the gentlemen, displaying that touch of Bohemianism which gives such a *cachet* to Plumstead, removed their coats. An exquisite rendering of some of the most popular melodies of the day was given on the gramophone, and brought a very agreeable evening to a conclusion.

The Naval Pageant has caused considerable excitement among L.C.C. nautical circles in the neighbourhood of Blackfriars. Criticism of an unfavourable character has been expressed at the failure to provide the crews with any orchestral diversion in the shape of concertinas and cornets—a regrettable omission on the part of a cheese-paring Admiralty. A local expert, who invited the crew of a destroyer to retrieve the coppers which he had thrown in the river, is understood to have formed an unfavourable opinion as to the capabilities of our tars.

Our Isle of Dogs and North Woolwich chit-chat is unavoidably held over until the middle of next week.

THE RABBITS.

CHAPTER V.—AT PLAY.

I SELECTED a handkerchief, gave a last look at the weather, which was beastly, and went down (very late) to breakfast. As I opened the door there was a sudden hush. Everybody looked eagerly at me. Then Miss Fortescue tittered.

Well, you know how one feels when that happens. I put my hand quickly to my tie—it was still there. I squinted down my nose, but there was no smut. To make quite sure I went over to the glass. Then Simpson exploded.

Yet nobody spoke. They all sat there watching me . . . and at last I began to get nervous. I opened my mouth to say "Good morning," but before I got it out Miss Blair gave a little shriek of excitement. That upset me altogether. I walked up to the teapot and, pouring myself out a cup, said, with exaggerated carelessness: "Rotten day, isn't it?"

And then came the laughter—shout after shout.

I held out my hand to Myra. "Good-bye," I said, "I'm going home. Thank you for a very jolly time, but I'm not going to be bullied."

"Oh, you dear," she gurgled.

"I am rather sweet before breakfast," I admitted, "but how—"

"It was too heavenly of you. I never thought you would."

"I think I shall go back to bed."

"It was rather rough luck," said Archie, "but of course the later you are, the worse it is for you."

"And the higher the fewer. Quite so. If this is from 'Breakfast Table Topics' in *The Daily Mirror*, I haven't seen them to-day; but I'll do my best."

"Archie, explain."

Archie took up a piece of paper from the table and explained. "It's like this," he said. "I came down first and looked at the weather, and said—"

"Anyone would," I put in quickly.

"Well, then, Blair came in and said, 'Beastly day,' and then Simpson—Well, I thought I'd write down everybody's first remark, to see if anybody let the weather alone. Here they are."

"It's awful," put in Myra, "to have one's remarks taken down straight off. I've quite forgotten what I said."

This was the list.

Archie: "Bother." (So he says.)

Blair: "What a beastly day!"

Simpson: "What a jolly day!"

The Major: "Well, not much cricket to-day, hey?"

Myra: "Oh, my dear, what a go!"

Miss Blair: "What a terrible day!"

Miss Fortescue: "Oh, you poor men—what a day!"

Thomas: "Rotten day, isn't it?"

Me: "Rotten day, isn't it?"

"I don't think much of Thomas's remark," I said.

Later on in the morning we met (all except the Major, that is) in the room which Myra calls hers and Archie calls the nursery, and tried to think of something to do.

"I'm not going to play Bridge all day for anyone," said Archie.

"The host should lay himself out to amuse his guests," said Myra.

"Otherwise his guests will lay him out," I warned him, "to amuse themselves."

"Well, what do you all want to do?"

"I should like to look at a photograph album," said Thomas.

"Stump cricket."

"What about hide-and-seek?"

"No, I've got it," cried Archie; "we'll be Boy Scouts."

"Hooray!" cried everybody else.

Archie was already on his hands and knees. "Ha!" he said, "is that the spoor of the white ant that I see before me? Spoorly not. I have but been winded by the water-beetle."

"Sound, sound the trumpet, beat the drum,
To all the scouting world proclaim
One crowded stalk upon the tum
Is worth an age without a name."

"Archie!" shrieked Myra in horror. "It is too late," she added, "all the ladies have swooned."

We arranged sides. Myra and I and Simpson and Thomas against the others. They were to start first.

"This isn't simply hide-and-seek," said Archie as they went off. "You've got to track us fairly. We shall probably 'blaze' door-posts. When you hear the bleat of a tinned sardine that means we're ready. Keep your eyes skinned, my hearties, and Heaven defend the right."

"We ought to have bare knees really," said Myra when they'd gone. "Boy scouts always do. So that when they go through a bed of nettles they know they've been."

"I shall stalk the stairs to begin with," I said. "Simpson, you go down the back way, and look as much like a vacuum-cleaner as possible. Then they won't notice you. Thomas and Myra—Hush! Listen! Was that the bleat of a fresh sardine or the tinned variety?"

"Tinned," said Myra. "Let's go."

We went. I took the Queen Anne staircase on my—in the proper stalking position. I moved very slowly, searching for spoor. Half-way down the stairs my back-fin slipped, and I shot over the old oak at a tremendous pace, landing in the hall like a Channel swimmer. Looking up I saw Thomas in front of me. He was examining the doors for "blazes." Myra was next to him, her ear to the ground, listening for the gallop of horses' hoofs. I got up and went over to them.

"Hast seen aught of a comely wench

in parlous case, hight Mistress Dablia?" I asked Thomas.

"Boy scouts don't talk like that," he said gruffly.

"I beg your pardon. I was thinking that I was a Cavalier and you were a Roundhead. Now I perceive that you are just an ordinary fathead."

"Why," said Myra at the foot of the stairs, "what does this button mean? Have I found a clue?"

I examined it, and then I looked at my own coat.

"You have," I said. "Somebody has been down those stairs quite recently, for the button is still warm."

"Where is Scout Simpson?"

At that moment he appeared breathless with excitement.

"I have had an adventure," he said hurriedly, without saluting. "I was on the back stairs looking like a vacuum cleaner, when suddenly Archie and Miss Blair appeared. They looked right at me, but didn't seem to penetrate my disguise. Archie, in fact, leant against me, and said to Miss Blair, 'I will now tell you of my secret mission. I carry caviare—I mean dispatches to the general. Breathe but a word of this to the enemy, and I miss the half-holiday on Saturday. Come, let us be going, but first to burn the secret code.' And—and then he struck a match on me, and burned it."

Myra gurgled, and hastily looked solemn again. "Proceed, Scout Simpson," she said, "for the night approaches apace."

"Well, then they started down the stairs, and I went after them on my—scouting, you know. I made rather a noise at one corner, and Archie looked round at me, and said to Miss Blair, 'The tadpoles are out full early. See yonder where one lies basking.' And he came back and put his foot on me and said, 'Nay, 'tis but a shadow. Let us return right hastily. Yet tarry a moment what time I lay a false trail.' So they tarried and he wrote a note and dropped it on me. And afterwards I got up and here it is."

"The secret dispatch," cried Myra.

"It's addressed to the Scoutmistress, and it says outside, 'Private, not to be opened till Christmas Day.'"

Myra opened it and read: "*Your blessed scouts are everywhere. Let me just have five minutes with her in the nursery, there's a dear. I'd do as much for you.*"

But she didn't read it aloud, and I didn't see it till some days afterwards. She simply put it away, and smiled, and announced that the scouts would now adjourn to the billiard-room for pemmican and other refreshments; which they did. The engagement was announced that evening.

A. A. M.



Father. "Now, look here, you girls—when you grow up one of you must be able to speak French, and the other German."
Brenda. "All right, Dad; and Muriel had better learn German, because she can gargle best."

"THE DICTATOR" UNBENDS.

By the courtesy of the Editor of *The Dictator*, who has placed his advance proofs at our disposal, we are enabled to forestall the interesting correspondence which will appear in our esteemed contemporary's next issue:—

THE CALL OF THE DABCHICK.

SIR,—The curious variations of opinion about the exact interval of the cry of the dabchick may be possibly explained by the following remarkable experience which fell to my lot when I was ranching in Canada several years ago. In those days I had a pet dabchick which used to sleep, standing on one leg, on the top of my cruet-stand. When visitors entered my sitting-room he used to cry out, "Wipe your feet, wipe your feet," in an anapaestic measure, the first two syllables being on the same note, the last being a minor tenth below. (This I have on the authority of my landlady, who was a Primitive Methodist with an absolute sense of pitch). On one occasion a French officer came to see me and was greeted by "Baba" with the usual salutation, but at a different pitch. I at once rang the bell for the landlady, who informed me that the interval was a major sixth. When this was told the officer he nearly fainted with amazement, but on recovering his self-possession exclaimed, "But that is me! I am a Major in the Sixth regiment of Chasseurs!"

But "Baba" was altogether an exceptional bird. On my return to England I trained him to mark golf balls, and no matter how deeply it was embedded in heather or whins, he would invariably fly like an arrow to the globe, keeping up a constant twitter until the caddie had located it. Unfortunately, when I was playing at Musselwick last February with an Austrian Archduke, my partner sliced his drive so badly that he struck "Baba," who was sitting on the tee-box, and killed him on the spot.

I am, Sir, etc.

A. LEGGE PULLAR.

8, Marine Prospect, Brondesbury.

P.S.—If your readers' patience is not exhausted I wonder whether they will assist me in ascertaining why it is that the old English name for the dabchick is "the Nope"?

[We are delighted to print Mr. Legge Pullar's fascinating letter, and only regret that we are unable to reproduce the photograph of "Baba's" tomb, with which it is accompanied. So gifted a creature, indeed, deserved princely obsequies. We can assure Mr. Legge Pullar that, whatever may be the case with our readers, our patience is never exhausted by these recitals. They enable us to face the dreadful prospect of Mr. LLOYD-

GEORGE'S Budget with renewed fortitude. As regards the beautiful old English word "Nope," we may be allowed to remark that it has been transplanted to America as a synonym for "No," but we are not aware that "Yep," the transatlantic for "Yes," was used by GILBERT WHITE as the nickname for any bird. Yet "Yep" is a singularly pleasing monosyllable with a true Elizabethan ring about it.—Ed. *Dictator*.]

CHRISTIAN NAMES FOR ANIMALS.

SIR,—One of your correspondents has called attention to the pleasant habit of giving birds Christian names, e.g. Thomas Tit, William Wagtail, Philip Sparrow. In our household this practice is not confined to a few birds, but is of universal application. From earliest infancy my children have been taught to address all animals alliteratively—Bartholomew Blue-bottle, Millicent Mouse, Christopher Cockroach, &c. The result is to be seen in the extraordinary tameness of all the fauna in our neighbourhood. Only yesterday a wood-pigeon flew into my dressing-room while I was shaving and remained perched on my head until the operation was finished. I ought to add that I have trained a squirrel to act as a pen-wiper while I am writing, and that we have a pet cricket and a tame bat who are the best of friends.

I am, Sir, &c. D. D. PHIBBS.

Verity Parva Vicarage.

STRANGE CONDUCT OF A SEMI-BOMBAY DUCK.

SIR,—A valuable semi-Bombay duck in my farm-yard, which habitually quacks in the key of D flat, has suddenly and without any warning taken to quacking in the key of F sharp minor. The odd thing about it is that this rise in pitch should have synchronised with a fall in the thermometer.

Congratulating you on your splendid defence of the House of Lords,

I am, Sir, &c.,

(Mrs.) ANNA NYASS.

The Oaks, Much Lychem.

[Ducks are very imitative creatures, and it is possible that the bird in question may have heard some one playing a piece in the romantic key of F sharp minor, and temporarily attuned its cry to the piano. It is, indeed, a pleasure to know that our policy in regard to the House of Lords has commended itself to the possessor of this talented fowl.—Ed. *Dictator*.]

THE BUNTING FAMILY.

SIR,—Can any of your readers tell me whether the yellow Bunting is the baby Bunting mentioned in the historic ballad.

I am, Sir, &c. PAUL PRIOR.
Bosham.

[We have always been under the im-

pression that the Bunting family were human beings, who were much addicted to the chase. But we are open to correction. Perhaps Mr. Prior could get the information of which he is in need on applying to the First Sea Lord at the Admiralty.—Ed. *Dictator*.]

"THE DICTATOR" TENT AT BISLEY.

SIR,—The generous interest of your readers, who have, as in former years, provided a *Dictator* tent at Bisley, emboldens me to send you the accompanying brief account of the entertainments held therein during the past week:—

The aim of the tent is to refresh and amuse riflemen, after their day's shooting is over, by a succession of exhilarating programmes. This year several of the old features have been retained, but a number of new items have been added. Thus the entire staff of *The Dictator* have given imitations of various animals and birds, notably the cuckoo, the peacock, the chiff-chaff, the corn-crake, the night-jar, the jay, and the screech-owl. The Editor has lectured on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday on "Do Field-mice use field artillery?" and on Monday, Wednesday and Friday on "Bastiat and the Budget." The tent holds forty persons, but one day last week, during a lecture on "The Fiscal Inwardness of Persian Cats," fifty-seven people managed to get inside.

I am, Sir, etc.,

HAROLD VILLIERS PEEL,

Hon. Sec. Free Trade Entertainment Association.

[In the circumstances for us to offer any comment might seem to savour of egotism, but we cannot refrain from expressing our regret that Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE did not see his way to attend the lecture on "Bastiat and the Budget." A debate in a tent, as LINCOLN remarks, is a soul-shaking experience. *A propos* of fieldmice, can any of our readers supply us with any authentic anecdotes about the mole of HADRIAN?—Ed. *Dictator*.]

Candour from a Golf Committee.

"Rule 10.—Disputes respecting the play shall be determined by the Committee, with power to add to their number."

The cause of the present bad weather has now been scientifically explained by the ha' penny press thus:

"It is only necessary for the barometer to undertake a steady and sustained rise in England, France, and Germany, for the distribution of pressure to become favourable for a spell of real summer weather."

You see how impossible it is for the pressure to do anything until the barometer makes a start.

P. O. POLITENESS.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON'S promise of rewards for civility is causing such a revolution in post-office officials that several customers are complaining of shock. The following dialogues, overheard in a local office, may be taken as average samples of the state of things at present prevailing:—

First Customer. How much is this parcel?

Counter Clerk (ticking off telegram). Excuse me one moment. (Finishes message.) So sorry to keep you waiting, but we are short-handed to-day. That parcel will be fourpence, if you please, *parcels post*.

First Customer. What will it be *letter post*?

Counter Clerk. It will be fivepence halfpenny, *letter post*; and in case you care to know, it would be precisely the same by *book post*.

First Customer. Dear, dear—that seems very expensive. Will you weigh it again to make sure?

Counter Clerk. With pleasure. Yes, that is correct—let me jot down the amounts for you on a piece of paper.

First Customer (stares at paper and hesitates for thirty seconds). I've changed my mind; I think I'll send it by hand, after all, if you'll give it back to me.

Counter Clerk. Certainly. The weather looks like rain, but I hope it will hold off till you get home. Good morning, and thank you.

Second Customer. If I send a letter to my husband's mother at Little Billethy about nine to-night, what time will it be delivered?

Counter Clerk. I must just look it up—I won't keep you a moment. Ah! it won't be delivered till to-morrow afternoon at Little Billethy—but if they send to Great Billethy they can collect it to-morrow morning.

Second Customer. They wouldn't do that, now John George is busy hay-making. But if my husband's mother leaves home this evening and spends to-morrow in Manchester, and they forward it, would she get it before she left the day after to-morrow?

Counter Clerk (looks it up in book). Yes, if they catch the first post from Little Billethy.

Second Customer. Well, but would Emma Jane leave her Sunday pie making to do that?

Counter Clerk. I'm very sorry, but I'm afraid I can't tell you that.

Second Customer. Then I think it'll be safest not to write, but to wait till she comes home. That's all this morning.

Counter Clerk. Nothing else I can do? Good morning, and thank you.

Third Customer. Will you give me a penny stamp?



SKILFUL DRIVING.

First Irishman (in London Tube). "SURE AN' 'TIS A MIGHTY STHRANGE WAY OF TRAVELLING."

Second Irishman. "BEDAD, 'TIS A WONDHER WE DON'T SHTRIKE AND BURST SOME WATHER-PIPE!"

Counter Clerk. Delighted. What unseasonable weather!

Third Customer. Oh!—ah—yes—very (tenders sovereign). Smallest I have.

Counter Clerk. Don't mention it. How would you like the change?

Third Customer. All silver, please—and three shillings in sixpences and threepenny bits—new ones, if possible.

Counter Clerk. I only have two new sixpences and four new threepenny bits this morning. I'm so sorry.

Third Customer. Oh, well, that'll do. (Counts change.) Nineteen and eleven—that's right—but where's the stamp?

Counter Clerk. Here it is. May I lick it for you? The taste of the gum is a little unpleasant to some customers.

Third Customer. Much obliged.

Counter Clerk. Not at all—a pleasure. Good morning, and thank you.

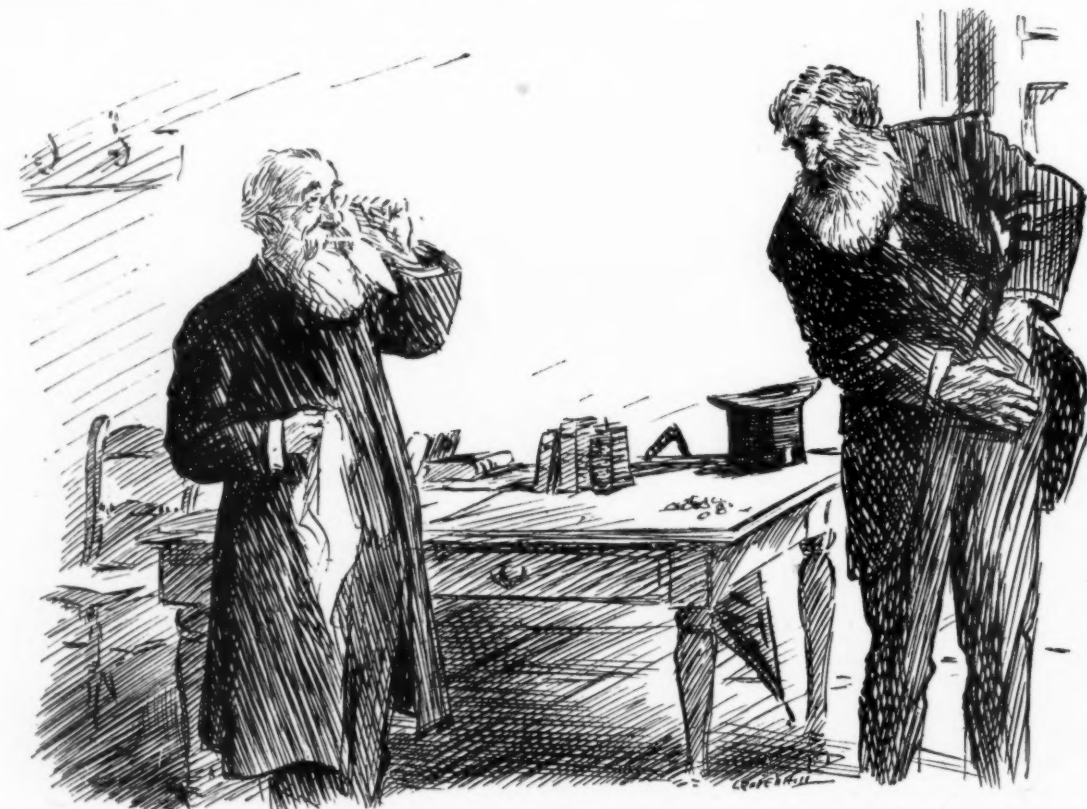
From an advt.:

"There is nothing I have had so much confidence in placing before my Lady Patrons than my Shampoo Powder. I have no hesitation in making the above remark. It does not change the colour of the hair. It removes scurf."

It is a bad remark for all that, and made our hair stand on end.

"Jeffries is not old, but he finds difficulty in reducing his portly waist to the dimensions of the prize-ring."—*Daily Telegraph*.

Even if it was only a 16 ft. ring, JEFFRIES should have had no real difficulty.



Mackintosh (to his Elder, who has advised him to try and check his strong language at Golf by picking up pebbles, one for every bad word, and bringing them to the Elder on Sunday after kirk). "HERE, MAN, IS A HANDFU' FOR 'BOTHERS,' AND HERE, MAN, IS ANOTHER FOR 'HANGS.'"

Elder. "WEEL, THAT'S NO VERRA DREADFU', I'M THINKING."

Mackintosh. "AY, BUT BIDE A WEE, THERE'S A CART COMING UP THE HILL WIT' THE 'DAMNS!'"

TO A HUNTRESS.

WHEN you survey the trophies of your cunning,
And muse, Corinna, on the grim remains
Of those poor wights who, hardly in the running,
Were led to think themselves your happy swains,
And when they learnt the truth despaired and blubbered,
And left their scalps to fill your Indian cupboard—

Take special heed (I do not ask for mercy;
The mariners of old were wise to shun
A second visit to the shores of Circe).

But in that horrid pile take heed of one,
A striking chevelure that (proud tormenter)
Was trained to part exactly down the centre.

That one is mine; and if you have them labelled,
And with your sister Sioux sometimes swap
Impressions of the war-path true and fabled,
I charge you to observe this pious crop,
And tell them how its wearer took his gruel,
A dauntless paleface, in the love-god's duel.

Some there may well have been who tumbled nicely,
And when you told that immemorial fib
Of how you'd be a sister, said precisely
The sort of things you liked of love *ad lib.*,
And ceaseless adoration that should flow on
Till death untimely supervened, and so on.

But not the present writer; loth and lagging.

He took some time to conquer, and he turned
Nobly to bay, indignant of the bagging.

Gave you an awkward interlude when spurned,
Thrilled with the anger of a wounded poet,
Thought you a hardened flirt, and let you know it.

Therefore, I say, do honour to a victim
That gave you such an anxious hour to stalk,
That struggled manfully, and, when you tricked him,
Not lightly yielded to the tomahawk;
And when the tales of triumph are recounted
Revere that votive tuft and have it mounted.

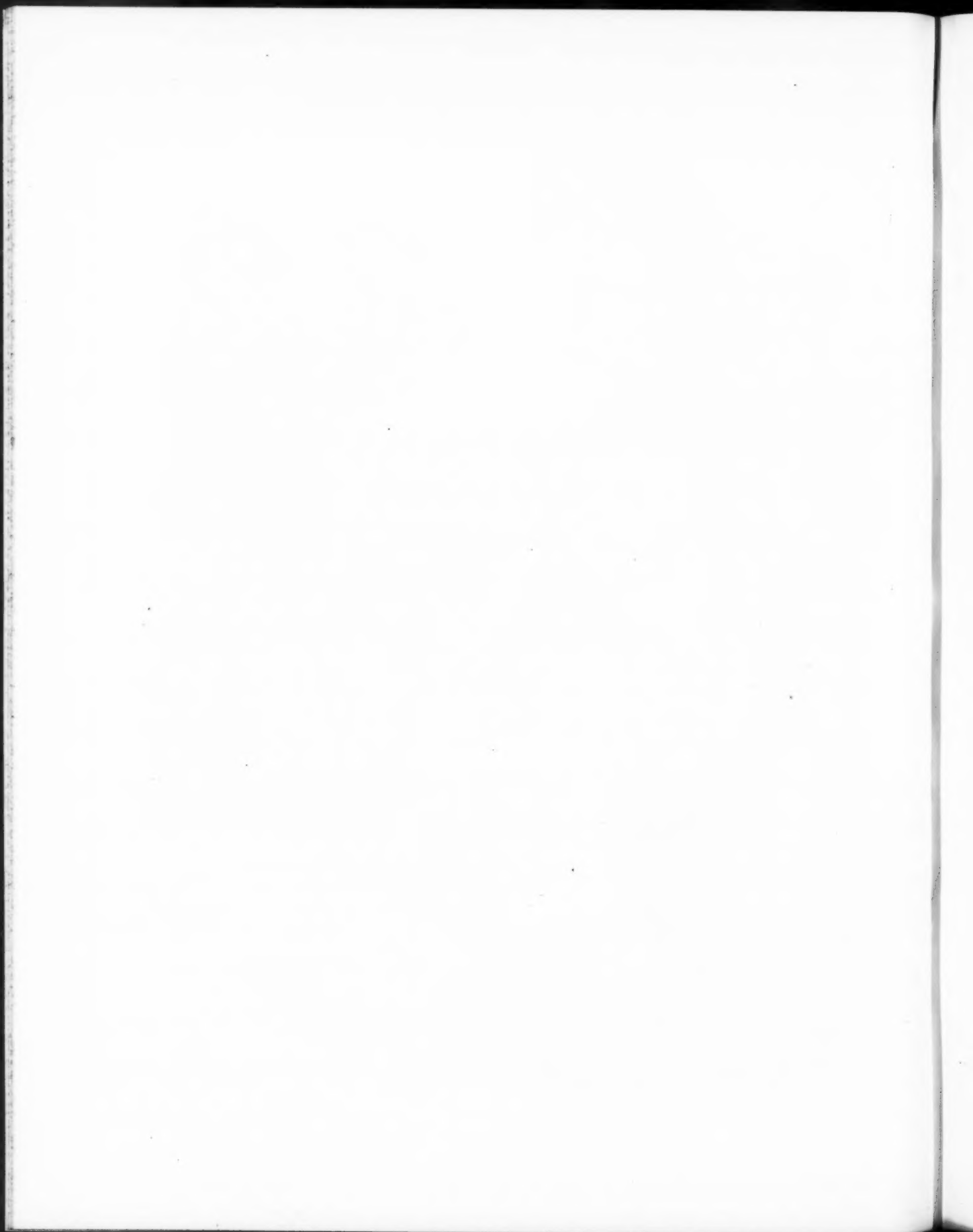
DEAR MR. PUNCH,—I notice in *The Daily News* a photograph of an orator on a chair with an audience of six boys. It is placed beside a photograph of a Woman's Suffrage gathering, and entitled "A Contrast in Audiences. (2) Tariff Reform." In *The Daily Mail* I observe a group of the same figures, but the legend this time is "A Free Trade Orator and his Audience." I shall be glad if you will allow me space to inform editors of these and other papers that I am now touring the provinces with "Victor," my tame donkey, and that I am ready to be photographed in suitable positions as

- (1) A Tariff Reformer and his Following.
- (2) Explaining the Budget to a Sympathetic Audience.
- (3) Brother Socialists.

My fee is half-a-guinea. Yours faithfully, PRO BONO PUBLICO.



[The Act of Union is about to be presented, for sanction, to the British Parliament.]



ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Lords, Monday, July 12.—One of the most difficult tasks that falls to the lot of a Leader of either House is the pronouncement of panegyrics on departed statesmen. On a historic occasion DIZZY, remembering MOLIÈRE'S avowed practice of taking his good things wherever he found them, got over the difficulty by incorporating in the details of his lament a purple passage from a eulogy spoken by a French orator at the tomb of a great Frenchman.

GLADSTONE at his best on these occasions. His panegyric on PEEL, with its apt quotation of the splendid lines beginning, "Now is the stately column broke," is a precious possession. PRINCE ARTHUR touches a high level. C.-B., who on more than one occasion joined him in paying tribute to the mighty dead, was, in quite different style, a worthy compeer. The present PREMIER, called upon to bewail the passing of his predecessor, struck a note that surprised as it pleased the House by its genuine emotion expressed in terms of simple eloquence.

To-night, CREWE, rising to pay a tribute to the memory of Lord RUFON, established

a fresh claim on steadily growing esteem of a mercilessly critical Assembly. His brief speech was lofty in conception, perfect in phrasing. Beneath the reverence of a still young statesman for the memory of a veteran who had filled with distinction most of the offices which are the prizes of a political career, was heard the note of personal affection for one whom, as he simply said, "I have known all my life."

The Commons spent their tenth night in Committee on Budget Bill. Before it was reached disturbing effect created by inquiry submitted by LANE-FOX. Strategically acquired commanding position by drawing from unsuspecting WAR MINISTER admission that on the battlefield the cavalry of the Territorial Army will act in conjunction with regular cavalry.

"Very well," said LANE-FOX, shaking his bridle hand, and nipping with relentless



"THEN 'ERE'S TO BOBS BAHADUR."

(Dedicated to the National Service League.)

Earl Roberts, K.G., sees the real enemies of his country (Generals von Sloth, von Slacking, and Rotten-Optimism) and, as ever, goes for them straight. (Alas, he discovers that the modern Englishman "will do anything in reason," but he won't learn to defend his home.)

knees an imaginary horse, as if prepared to ride down the hapless Minister, "what would happen if the order to charge were given to the Yeomanry—?"

Here assistance came from unexpected quarter. SPEAKER interposed with remark that to ask the MINISTER for WAR what would happen if the Yeomanry were ordered to charge is a projection of imagination carried too far for the Question Hour.

House laughed; LANE-FOX sat down with his question not only unanswered but incomplete. Its effect nevertheless unmistakable and enduring. Through the long hours that followed, when Members were ostensibly discussing methods of ascertaining the original site value of land, or contemplating the contingency of decrement instead of increment, one could see the troubled look on pallid faces as lips silently formed the fateful question, "What would happen if the order to charge were given to the Yeomanry?"

Business done.—Commons still harping on Clause 2 of Budget Bill.

Tuesday.—Like the traditional British soldier of whom he is himself the best type, BOBS never knows when he is beaten. Since he laid down the arms of active service has devoted himself to crusade designed to bring about



"IF THE YEOMANRY WERE ORDERED TO CHARGE."

A Battle Picture.

(Mr. G. Lane-Fox, the "Caran d'Ache" Yeoman.)

universal Army service. Made several assaults on citadel of the Lords. Now, advancing with flags flying, drums beating, trumpets blaring, sits down before it in force. Or, as the Parliamentary reports put it, "Lord Roberts moved the second reading of the National Service Bill."

NORTHUMBERLAND submits resolution involving rejection of Bill. As his Grace stood behind Front Opposition Bench consulting manuscript on which his *jeux d'esprit* were written there was nothing in his bearing or personal appearance to suggest the PERCY whom DOUGLAS knew at Chevy Chase. On the contrary, rather suggestive, as SARK observed, of "the Waterloo House young man" known to another generation now grown into the sixties. Appearances notoriously deceptive. When in fine passage the Duke intimated his readiness, if necessary, to "see this fight out on his stumps," a wave of emotion ran through habitually icy audience.

This was last night. Debate resumed this afternoon in same conditions of crowded benches and thronged side galleries whence bright eyes, the owners gowned in daintiest summer frocks, rained influence. Affair admirably stage-managed. Whilst MILNER was on his legs expounding heroic views in halting sentences, Heaven's artillery suddenly brought into action. Peal after peal of thunder broke over startled town; through the open windows was heard the plash of battalions of torrential rain.

LANSOWNE, in one of his masterly balanced speeches, damned the Bill with faint praise of motives of its supporters. By common consent honours of debate rest with MAYO. In carefully prepared address, which comprised slight *résumé* of Peninsula War that left much to be desired in NAPIER, he artfully led the listening senate up to Trafalgar. His intent, born and nurtured in the study, was to cite the date of the battle, let it come with a clash like the roar of a *Dreadnought* gun, and then sit down.

Turn which circumstances took unfortunately not only spoiled a well-designed plan, but prevented the House from knowing exactly how it would have worked out. That is a detail. What happened was that MAYO, having skillfully prepared the ground for his *coup*, remarked:

"As your lordships know, the battle of Trafalgar was fought in the year—er—in the year—er—er—"



DESCENDED FROM HOTSPUR.

D-he of N-rth-umb-rl-nd. "Oh, my dear friends, do not let our dear brother Roberts draw you aside from the true path! Believe me, an armed camp is the haunt of the—ahem! —of Beelzebub, and no-o-o pla-a-ace for our de-ar sons!"

He had forgotten the date. Worst of it was that, looking helplessly round, he found no noble lord sitting near or far who was able to supply it.

"Well, my lords," said MAYO, brisking up, "for the purposes of my argument it does not matter in what year Trafalgar was fought."

Plucky this. But general impression remained that it was a trifle inadequate.



CELEBRITIES VERY MUCH AT HOME.

Mr. A. E. W. Mason takes the Finance Bill lying down.

Business done—Lord ROBERTS's Bill thrown out by 123 votes against 103.

House of Commons, Thursday.—Once upon a time a learned judge—was it Mr. Justice CHANNELL?—summing up a case, remarked that he "had a great mind to" take a certain course. In the index of the current *Law Reports* appears the line, "Mr. Justice Channell: his great mind."

The MEMBER FOR SARK, indexing to-day's Parliamentary Reports, writes the line—

"Mr. Speaker Lowther: his blank mind."

No suggestion of damnatory oburgation lurks in the phrase. It merely records the masterly attitude of ignorance assumed by the SPEAKER at a critical moment. During a sitting which commenced yesterday afternoon at 2.50, closing this morning a few minutes after 9, a noble earl took occasion to observe that a gentleman belonging to West Ham and the Labour Party was not in a condition usefully to take part in debate. The gentleman from West Ham, refraining from attempt to mince matters, retorted that the noble lord was a liar. Further, he indicated readiness to "ram the words down his throat." Declining to obey order from the Chair to withdraw the offensive term, the gentleman from West Ham was directed to withdraw himself. This he did, pausing at the Bar to invite the noble earl to walk out with him and "see if you are as sober as I am."

On resumption of sittings to-day, the SPEAKER was approached with request for advice on the matter. It was here that the right honourable gentleman's mind revealed its incorrigible blankness.

"I must," he said, "decline to admit any knowledge of what has occurred. The official report is not yet published. Reports in the newspapers may or may not be reliable. My mind is unaffected by any account I may have seen."

No getting over that. So the matter dropped for the time, and Clerk proceeded to read Orders of the Day.

Business done.—Education Vote in Committee of Supply.

"The bridesmaids wore dainty dresses of French or Organdy muslin with sun bonnets of the same trimmed with bunches of ribbon, and carried bouquets of shaded green peas to match."

Car. isle Journal.

This is the latest fashion. Economical bridegrooms will find one mangold-wurzel apiece comes even cheaper.



"SEEMS A BIT DRY, DON'T 'E? KEEPS ON DRINKIN' WATER."

"IT AIN'T BECOS' 'E'S DRY THAT 'E WANTS WATER—IT'S BECOS' 'E'S EATIN' 'IS OWN WORDS."

THE MAY-FLY.

THIS interesting creature is to be found in parts of Great Britain and in certain of the United States of America. Its favourite habitation, however, is the Pas-de-Calais, the natives there giving it the name of *Peut-être*.

By night it stays quietly within some place of shelter, appearing only for brief periods in the daytime. Its organism is a frail one, and easily gets out of order; but when it is in good health its movements—sometimes a swift progress along the ground, at others a graceful ascent into the air—are very interesting, and its glistening wings make it a thing of beauty. In the air its gambols are in the form of circular flights of several minutes' duration.

Though the May-fly exists on both sides of the Channel, curiously enough one has never been known to cross from one country to another up to the time of writing. The strong winds prevailing there may be the reason, for the May-fly is most sensitive to aerial dis-

turbances other than a breeze of the right strength from the right quarter—a breeze that is very rare at this time of the year. Other kinds render it exceedingly shy and retiring.

The May-fly is very fond of newspapers, an affection which is warmly reciprocated.

Strong ambition and great courage, tempered by caution, are the chief characteristics of the creature. This last quality is apt to interfere with its plans; but, after all, the other qualities are in the majority, and are likely to prevail in the long fly.

From San Francisco comes the news that the police have in their possession a gentleman who has married ten widows and is engaged to fourteen more. This is carrying specialisation too far.

"Mayfair and Belgravia set the note which is followed, of course, afar off in every gentile suburb."—*Standard*.

This does *not* refer to Bayswater.

The following simple and explicit directions are posted up in a hotel on the Nordfjord:—

"The fire escape!

Direction for use:

The one end of the rope is to be fixed at the hook in the window frame, the other is to turn out of the window. The plaited snorter, which is fixed at the log of wood, is to be put under your arms, whereupon you may safely let yourself slide down. You may regulate the hurry by keeping the rope under the log. If more persons are to be saved, you have to pull up the contrary end of the rope, fix this at the hook and go on so till nobody is left."

"There are forty bed-rooms, with hot and cold water laid on, while one-half that delicate attention is lavished on the putting greens of the new course."—*Daily Graphic*.

We are still in doubt as to which half of the delicate attention is lavished—whether the greens get forty bedrooms' worth of either hot or cold, or twenty bed-rooms' worth of both.

THE KELT.

THE youngest subaltern came in behind the tea-tray and asked me the usual first question before we had finished shaking hands.

"Do you fish?"

"Well, I have, you know," I admitted, "at bazaars—parcels with loops of string on them, and all that."

"Then you haven't heard about me?"

"I really couldn't say. I've done nothing but hear about people ever since I've been in Ireland, and everybody seems to be related to everybody else, either through the Quinns of Killy—what-is-it, or the Gores of Bally—something-or-other, so if you happen in some way to be a Gore or a Quinn, Mr. Smithson—"

The youngest subaltern sighed and helped himself to potato-cake.

"I'm afraid not," he said; "but you can't think how I've enjoyed meeting someone who doesn't know all about me."

"You're not a Channel-swimmer, are you?" I asked hastily.

He shook his head.

"I have it then; you've been flying."

"I wish I had! You know a fellow, even in the Army, must have a hobby for his few spare moments. In the hunting season one could put in two or three days a week with the hounds, but now there's nothing to do but fish. I did think of a motor once, but the Budget came in and I took a fishing instead. I thought it would be cheaper, but I'm not so sure of it now. Well, I fished for a month—Sundays too—and, at last, I got a bite!"

His manner was full of suppressed tragedy, and from an uneasy movement of his tea-cup hand I saw that he would have liked to pull his moustache. I was glad he couldn't, for it was a mere seedling, and I implored him to go on.

"It was a great moment. You never felt such a beggar to pull—jerked the line like a young cart-horse. I got quite excited, and so did all the others."

"The other fish?"

"No, the other people. There were lots of them—couldn't say how many—jumping up and down, yelling 'Sure but the gentleman's met a fish.' Seemed to come up out of rabbit holes and from behind bushes all over the place—like special correspondents. There was some red hair, and a squint, and a pair of patched trousers, I know; but I'm hanged if I could say whether the trousers and the squint went together, or whether the hair belonged to them or to another person who was tied together with straw bands and bits of rope."

"Gores or Quinns?" I murmured.

"I think it was trousers who gaffed him, and I know it was the squint who squatted down beside him and said, 'Sorr, he's a Kelt!'"

"Ireland for the Irish again!" I exclaimed indignantly. "I hope you told him that it didn't matter to you whether the fish was a Kelt or a Pan-Anglican?"

I meant to say "Syro-Phœnician," but the other word came more handy, and he didn't seem to notice anything.

He shook his head sadly.

"You're supposed to put all Kelts back again into the river, it seems. Well, mine wasn't a very—er—Keltic Kelt, and it was my first fish, so I put it into my basket instead."

"What did the Gores say—I mean the natives?"

"They were very kind and tried to buck me up about it, but the man who has the opposite fishing came along, and he went dead against me. I suppose you haven't met him yet? I forget his name. Anyhow, he made money-out of bacon. He's one of your red-faced sportsmen, chock-a-block with conceit. Looks like a strutting turkey-cock!"

"Pride in his port, and all that?"

The youngest subaltern looked at me peevishly for a moment.

"I don't know about his cellar—never dined there myself; still, he's full-blown—very. We had an interchange of compliments over the river—I'm rather glad, now I come to think of it, that the river was there. Had the cheek to ask me if I'd ever hooked a salmon before. As a matter of fact I hadn't, or I shouldn't have been so keen on keeping that fish—so I left him bellowing on the bank. Jones and Batherson were the only fellows in the mess when I got back to barracks, and neither of them knows a Jock Scott from a—a—. Well, I was just telling them how it feels to have a real beauty like that on the end of your line, when into the barrack yard comes the Colonel's motor. He never does anything himself, you know; he's a slummocker!"

"Esperanto?" I asked faintly—it sounded bad.

"Tommy' for a lounge. He trots into the mess, and the first thing he says is, 'Hello, Smithson, Mr. Hanrahan (that's the bacon man's name) tells me you killed a Kelt this afternoon. If that's true, I wish you boys would be more careful; I won't have this known as the Cockney Brigade! Most unsportsmanlike!' And that's the sort of thing that has gone on ever since. I've given up fishing. If I go down to my stretch of river, old Hanrahan comes up and asks me how many Kelts I've got. Never even talk of fishing now, but everybody knows. Wherever I go I hear someone saying, 'That's the man who took a Kelt!' Prettiest girl in the county, barring her mouth, keen on fishing too, wouldn't even look at me at the Regimental Ball."

"Well," I said, rising, "it's a nasty

proverb to mention under the circumstances, but aren't there as many good fish in the sea as ever came out?"

"Oh, rather," he assented; "and, I say, I have enjoyed your talking to me, you know!"

ANOTHER NAVAL CRISIS.

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—I have got myself into trouble, trouble with a charge of gunpowder at the end of it. Laugh away, Mr. Punch! Laugh away, and do not stop laughing just because I add that you have got yourself into the same trouble, too.

You remember, though you may have tried to forget, a jolly little poem of mine about one Geoffrey Lovatt. It appeared in your issue of July 7, and dealt courageously with that gentleman's high collars and want of manhood, marking the subjection in which his wife held him. I have had it out with the wife, my own dear sister, and referred her to the *Punch* office, telling her that Mr. *Punch* is responsible by the etiquette of journalism, and that he's an excellent target by the grace of nature. Take my advice, Mr. *Punch*, and be out for some years, because she is of a persevering character and uncompanionable in her off moods.

It does not, however, end there, for there is this Geoffrey Lovatt to be reckoned with. It happens that he is a sailor, who, instead of sailing, boosts about the home waters in a nasty submarine, carrying with him two thoroughly unscrupulous torpedoes and a lot of warlike enthusiasm. It also happens that there is to be a naval review in the Thames, and this G. L. informs me darkly that he will be lying off Temple Pier with his little thingummy, ready to settle accounts.

You in Bouverie Street and I in the Temple are, I feel, much too accessible. What shall we do? Shall we allow the heart of the literary and legal world to be blown nowhere, merely withdrawing our two valuable selves inland before the catastrophe? Or shall we take our chances? There is this about it, that in order to fire upon us he will have to get the bows of his submarine well out of water, even on to the Embankment. He is an ingenious fellow and may manage that, but, if he does, you and I can always summons him for riding on the footpath.

That is our only hope, as far as I can see. You may have rather a taste for being in more than two places at once, but personally I strongly disapprove of being spread over London. So I say now—and when I say a thing I mean it—that, if this Geoffrey Lovatt persists in his idea and blows me up, I shall never speak to him again.

Your indignant CONTRIBUTOR.

THE PICTURE COLLECTOR'S GUIDE.

THE huge totals realised at certain of the season's sales at CHRISTIE'S are not unnaturally turning the thoughts of struggle-for-lifers towards art virtuosity as a means of livelihood if not wealth.

A few hints to parents who are thinking of making their sons successful collectors may not be out of place.

To those lacking capital the important thing at the outset is to pick up a real treasure for nothing and sell it advantageously. It is the first step that counts. To do this one should haunt the miscellaneous sale rooms, where many an Old Master has been discovered in job lots among carpets, safes and feather-beds. Everything that is old and grimy was not necessarily painted by MURILLO or REMBRANDT, RAPHAEL or TITIAN, but all might have been. Remember that.

Remember that beneath the top picture may always be another. If you buy a genuine Rembrandt and, on scraping it, find a portrait of WELLINGTON, stop scraping at once.

Cultivate your voice. Many master-pieces have been picked up for a mere song, and it would be dreadful to have no mere singing power when one was offered to you. Cram your repertory with mere songs.

Be wary. Remember that COROT painted nearly everything except the canvases that bear his name.

When purchasing of a dealer always look at the back of the picture first: it inspires respect, and puts him off from trying on his little games.

Bar in mind that a dealer's a dealer for a' that. He may wear clothes like yourself and talk like you, and sustain life in more or less the same way, but none the less he is a dealer.

Visit the National Gallery and learn how the great artists painted. This will make you the less likely to buy every Rembrandt that is offered to you. Study the difference between the styles of PERUGINO and CROME.

Keep a photograph of the Holbein Duchess on your wall. Let that be your star. Some day, say to yourself, I too will sell a picture to the nation.

THE CATS' PAGEANT.

THE Dogs' Pageant having been arranged for, the Cats' is now under consideration. Mr. LOUIS N. BARKER having no special leaning towards this spectacle, it is in the hands of his neighbour at Kensington, Mr. TOMS. Among the patrons are the PERSIAN AMBASSADOR, Mdlle. JANOTHA, Mr. Milkie Bard, and the Mayor of Cowes.

The first Tableau (to be spelled tabbyteau in honour of the occasion)



Distressed Mother (to little boy with a bad cold). "JIMMY DARLING, YOU REALLY MUSTN'T SNEEZE LIKE THAT!" Jimmy. "I DON'T SNEEZE, MUMMY; IT SNEEZES ME!"

will represent the origin of the cat. According to the old legend there was for a while no cat, nor was it missed. But after a while the earth became more populous and there were no longer as many men as women, and an old maid appeared; so the first cat was evolved to keep her company. As in the case of the dog the other animals contributed to her devising, the tiger giving a miniature of itself as a model. The leopard gave liveness, and the panther its spring, the fox cunning and the dormouse sleepiness, the giraffe disdain and the seamew its second syllable. Thus was the cat made.

Tabbyteau II. Prehistoric competition to find a name for the new creature. After many thousands of coupons have

been filled in the prize goes to the reader who suggested C.A.T.

Tabbyteau III. (Very magnificent and educational.) A procession of kings, from David to George III., at whom cats have looked.

Tabbyteau IV. Historic cats. NOAH, as before, with two. Odin's cat. GRAY's cat. The Kilkenny cats. Dame Wiggins of Lee's cats. The Brown cat (with thanks). Charley's Aunt, with cat laughing.

Tabbyteau V. (Very popular.) A procession of all the living "principal boys" who have played *Di-k Whittington*, each with his cat. Cameras not permitted except to representatives of the weekly illustrated papers.

Final Tabbyteau. (Very controversial.) Votes for cats.

OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

HOWEVER kindly I may feel disposed to Miss DOROTHEA CONYERS, I am bound to believe that she wrote all the tales published under her name in *The Conversion of Con Cregan, and other Stories* (HUTCHINSON). On the other hand I am not bound to accept the numerous laudatory statements on the outside pages as admissible evidence on her behalf. Sitting as judge, I feel inclined to pass a severe sentence of very penal servitude upon her for her plots and to award her a gold medal and a birthday honour for her atmospheres. She frivols without purpose in Ireland among hunters and racers, Pats and "asthores," and is natural and charming. She busies herself seriously in England with lost wills, compromised *débutantes* and impossible barristers, and is conventional and horrid. At her worst she takes pages to solve childish mysteries, which I, who have never before known the joy even of suspecting the guilty party, saw through at once. At her best she gets plenty of delightful fun out of the schemes and loves (but mostly the sport) of thoroughly Irish Irishmen. Wherefore this Court directs the public to read *The Conversion of Con Cregan* and most of the other stories, but binds Miss CONYERS over to keep the peace and on no account ever again to have anything to do with plots.

I understand that Mr. ARTHUR APPLIN originally published *The Stage Door* (WHITE) as a serial in the morning journal with the second largest net sale—a fact which, rightly considered, explains much. David Gellion was a starving dramatist, who sold his masterpiece to one Hershman, a manager of the deepest dye. But when the play was produced it was badly cast and was a failure; whereupon Gellion sought out Hershman in the managerial office, and smote him so that he fell into the fender and expired.

After which he himself jumped into the Thames. You may think that this ends the book. Not a bit of it. We are now introduced to Sir James Fitzwater, an opulent member of the Hershman Syndicate, who, seeing that what has taken place is really a first-class advertisement for the piece, promptly revives it, with the dramatist's widow as leading lady. Of course, the thing is a howling success, and subsequently Biddy, the heroine, arranges to marry Fitzwater on condition that he produces all her late husband's plays. The arrangement is a little difficult to follow, and is complicated by the reappearance of Gellion, who was only washed down the river as far (apparently) as Germany, whence he returns, under an alias, with a black beard and an entirely new and original musical comedy. Subsequently he rescues Fitzwater from a conflagration and gets his false beard burned, and so dies, this time in his proper person. The other characters, one supposes, live happy

ever after. Of them, I much prefer the fascinating Biddy, especially when she uses her influence over Fitzwater to make him abolish cloak-room fees and provide drinkable whisky in the theatre bars. So few heroines think of these things.

To insist upon the defects of a book when one finds oneself in sympathy with its motives is an ungracious task. Let me say at once, then (and have done with grumbling), that HUGH S. WALPOLE'S *The Wooden Horse* (SMITH, ELDER) is not without incongruities, and that the humour of title is too arbitrary to be amusing. To those, however, who detest snobbery and abhor rigid conventionalities this history of the Trojan family will make an instant appeal. Upon his return to Cornwall after an absence of twenty years Harry Trojan found that his son, Robin, was a martyr to good form. The Trojan rule was to know the right people, to be meticulously correct in speech and manner, and to remain aloof and aloft. Brought up in this numbing creed by his Aunt Clare, Robin was afraid either to show the smallest enthusiasm or to be in the least sentimental, and his father—in full revolt against Trojan traditions—determined to make a man of him and to win his love. A battle royal between Harry and Clare Trojan followed, and although in the struggle it is impossible to be on Miss Trojan's side the pathos of her position is revealed so clearly that it is equally impossible not to be sorry for her. Mr. WALPOLE is warmly to be praised for the clear perception he has of Cornish life, and for drawing attention to the vandals who—marching under the banner of progress—wish to change beautiful villages into band-swept watering-places.

The chief trouble with Mr. Opp, who gives his name to a new novel (HODDER AND STOUGHTON) by ALICE HEGAN RICE, author of *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch*, was that nature designed him for a philanthropist and unkind circumstances turned him

into a combination of commercial traveller and newspaper editor. Neither his store for the sale of shoes (this was Mr. Opp's particular line of dry goods) nor his paper, *The Opp Eagle*, attained the measure of success which his virtues deserved. And, since his courtship also missed the mark, Mr. Opp cannot truthfully be said to have made what they call over there "a good thing" of his life. But while the author debases him in every worldly way—and an American who fails in business is debased indeed—she contrives to create in him a type of unselfish goodness which should have a wide appeal. "Pity," says CHAUCER, "runneth soon in gentle heart," and, since all readers are "gentle," Mr. Opp is sure of abundant sympathy for his misfortunes and self-sacrifice.

"Amazon parrot.—Having holidays; take 30s. or £3."—*Glasgow Herald*. We had no idea a parrot's holidays took as much as that.



THE MODERN BOOK-STALL BOY.

"I CAN CONFIDENTLY RECOMMEND THIS NEW NOVEL BY THE WELL-KNOWN AUTHOR OF 'A PINK-FACED DEVIL.' IT DEALS VERY SUBTLY WITH THE SEX PROBLEM, AND IS A MASTERPIECE OF LITERARY STYLE."